

Pullman workers fought for fair labor conditions in the late 19th century, and Pullman porters helped advance America's civil rights movement.

During the economic depression of the 1890s, the Pullman community was the catalyst for the first industry-wide strike in the United States, which helped to lead to the creation of Labor Day as a national holiday. The Pullman porters are credited with creating the African-American middle class.

I have supported this designation for some time and have introduced legislation with my colleague Senator KIRK and with Congressman ROBIN KELLY to make the site a national historical monument.

Alderman Anthony Beale of Chicago's 9th Ward has worked hard to garner support for the recognition of Pullman. Many others in Chicago helped advance the proposal: Eleanor Gorski, with the Chicago Department of Planning and Development; David Doig, president of Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives, Lynn McClure and LeAaron Foley with the National Parks Conservation Association, and many others who drew attention to the historical significance of this neighborhood.

The Pullman national monument will be an important addition to the current National Park System. It highlights stories from communities that are rarely represented in other national parks. The park's urban location on Chicago's South Side makes it easily accessible to millions of people by public transportation—again setting Pullman apart from other national parks.

The National Park Service is associated with national wonders such as geysers and forests. Urban national parks are few and far between. With this designation, the Pullman neighborhood is joining the ranks of the National Mall and the Statue of Liberty as national parks accessible in urban areas. The monument will also provide an opportunity for tourism and job creation—much needed in this community.

It is only right that Pullman be preserved and honored as a part of our National Park System. I commend the President for this decision to showcase the prominence and legacy of Pullman in our Nation's history.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and with the majority controlling the first half.

The Senator from Alaska.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wish to take a few minutes today to talk about my growing concern over President Obama's policies regarding several major national security issues.

Of course, the President has just today sent over to Congress an authorization for use of military force against ISIL, the Islamic State, but over the past 6 years, as the quantity and frequency of international crises have grown, there have been some very clear trends that have emerged from this administration's foreign policy.

First, we have seen what might be dubbed the red-line syndrome in which the President uses stern language and strong rhetoric toward a hostile foreign regime or terrorist group and then backs it up with either total inaction or ineffectual action, thus inviting not respect, not fear, but ridicule.

The most infamous example, of course, is when the President remarked that the use of chemical weapons by Bashar al Assad of Syria would constitute a red line and then, after Assad had crossed that red line and used chemical weapons on his own people, the President did essentially nothing in response, thus damaging the United States' credibility on the world stage in the eyes of both our friends and our foes.

And I don't have to remind the Senate what has happened since that time. More than 200,000 Syrians have lost

their lives in this terrible civil war, and millions of Syrians have become displaced, either internally within the country or outside of the country in refugee camps, such as those I visited in Turkey and others in Lebanon and Jordan, just to name a few places.

So there are consequences associated with tough talk and no action.

The second pattern I have observed is what might be what my dad called, when I was growing up, paralysis by analysis. In other words, this is what some have called just plain dithering.

I think what the President seems to regard as a deliberative process and as a virtue others call dithering or paralysis by analysis. We can think of numerous examples, starting with the snail-like pace of the President's decision process early in his administration with regard to whether to surge U.S. forces in Afghanistan and, if so, what long-term role we should play there.

Again, in today's Washington Post, when I got up and was getting my first cup of coffee, I was reading that now apparently the administration is starting to reassess again their commitment to Afghanistan.

But the list of the President's paralysis by analysis is lengthy. The situation in Ukraine is another painful example. In Ukraine, the President has stood idly by and watched Russian President Vladimir Putin carry out a de facto invasion of Ukraine, starting with Crimea, and continuing today in eastern Ukraine.

From "mysterious little green men" to columns of full-up Russian tanks, the hand of Putin in the Ukraine has been unmistakable. It has been the most blatant land grab by a force that Europe has seen in quite some time. Yet the best President Obama has been able to do is more hollow rhetoric.

Now there have been modest economic assistance and nonlethal military resources to Ukraine's Government, and there have been some sanctions, but they apparently have not worked to dissuade Putin.

The Senate might recall what I recall when the President of Ukraine came to speak to a joint session of Congress just a few months ago when he asked for more aid, lethal aid to fight and defend his country. But he did say: Thank you for the blankets. Obviously you can't win a war with blankets.

By the way, the President's policies toward Russia have been an unabated disaster, dating all the way back to his 2009 reset of relations with Russia, and Vladimir Putin has taken full advantage of the opening that he sees and the lack of resoluteness on the part of the U.S. Government.

We have little to show for this so-called reset except realities such as this: the aforementioned Russian annexation of Ukraine, a Russian violation with impunity of President Reagan's landmark intermediate-range nuclear arms treaty, which now poses a direct threat to the security of our NATO allies in Europe.

We have also seen a steady flow of Russian weapons and other support to the blood-thirsty butcher of Syria, Bashar al Assad, who, as I mentioned earlier, has slaughtered more than 200,000 of his own country men and women.

The President's paralysis by analysis has also infected his incoherent approach in dealing with the terrorist army of ISIL, the so-called Islamic State. In 2011, after he pulled negotiations with the Iraqis on a status-of-forces agreement, the Obama administration proceeded with a misguided plan to pull the plug on the American presence in that country, thus squandering the blood and treasure that Americans invested in trying to liberate the Iraqis and provide them with a better future.

While it is true the Iraqis had not agreed to the U.S. conditions to an enduring American presence, including legal immunity for our troops, the administration simply gave up and failed to expend the political capital necessary to secure a status-of-forces agreement and to preserve the security gains in Iraq that, as I have said, had been paid for by American blood and treasure.

The resulting security vacuum, coupled with an incompetent and corrupt Prime Minister, set the conditions for ISIL to make alarming gains in territory and power in Iraq last year.

As chaos took hold in Syria, ISIL and other terrorist groups were flourishing. We know that in 2012 many of the President's most senior National Security Advisers—including then-CIA Director David Petraeus, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey, and then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta—all of them recommended at that time that the President initiate a program to arm vetted moderate Syrian rebels.

President Obama refused, publicly remarking just 1 year ago that ISIL, the Islamic State in the Levant, was the JV team of terrorist groups. Today, of course, the irony is the President has now sent us an authorization for the use of military force to fight this JV team, as he called it 1 year ago.

Then last summer, when the challenge had grown many times more complex and more difficult, the President dusted off the idea and moved ahead with it.

This is not exactly a picture of decisive leadership, nor is it designed to instill respect—indeed, fear—in our enemies nor confidence in our allies.

Today, with ISIL growing in strength in our region, our Commander in Chief cannot even bring himself to call the evil they represent by their rightful name. He refuses to acknowledge ISIL is a radical Islamist group, even after these jihadists have beheaded numerous American citizens, other Western captives, and burned alive a pilot from one of our closest allies, Jordan.

And then, of course, there is the most recent tragic news about Kayla

Mueller, the young humanitarian aid worker who tragically lost her life in the hands of ISIL terrorists, after being held captive in Syria since 2013. Kayla, from Phoenix, AZ, had been assisting the group Doctors Without Borders.

In 2011, in a video she posted on YouTube, remarking about the slaughter by Bashar al Assad of his own citizens in Syria, and the rampage of ISIL, she said that “silence is participation in this crime.”

Well, the President chose to use his recent speech at the National Prayer Breakfast that I attended, along with my wife and friends from Dallas, to paint a picture of moral equivalence between the barbaric entity known as ISIL and Christian crusaders from centuries ago. I have to say I am not the only one, apparently, who was confused by this equivalency or this comparison the President used during his remarks that morning.

This week, as Congress has now received the President's draft authorization for use of military force against ISIL, most of us still lack a clear understanding of the strategy the President seeks to employ in order to degrade and destroy this threat.

Even though the military campaign began last August, I know the Presiding Officer has served with distinction in the U.S. Marine Corps—and one of the things I hope the President will answer is how he hopes to defeat ISIL with just airstrikes. Indeed, as I understand from the military experts, you can't hope to win a conflict like this by blowing up things with airstrikes. You actually have to hold the territory so the enemy doesn't reoccupy it once you have moved on somewhere else.

The strategy we have heard so much about clearing, holding, and building, which seems to be an essential strategy when it comes to winning a conflict such as this, is nowhere to be seen in the President's strategy to have airstrike after airstrike after airstrike.

So I hope the President will enlighten us on what strategy he seeks to employ in order to degrade and destroy ISIL. If not, I trust that Members of the Senate on both sides of the aisle will offer their ideas about the kind of strategy that could have a reasonable chance of success.

I personally am reserving judgment on this authorization for use of military force until I learn more about the President's strategy and hear more about what sort of consensus we can have in the Senate about a strategy that has a reasonable chance of success.

I take very seriously—as I know every single Member of this Senate does—the granting of authority to use military force, putting our men and women in uniform in harm's way to protect not only us but our national security interests around the world. So this is one of the most serious and most important sorts of debates we can have as Members of the Senate. But I

worry about the flawed policies I have identified and that these are really just the tip of the iceberg.

In future remarks, I wish to come back and address a national security threat that I think is perhaps the most urgent, and that is of Iran's relentless quest for nuclear weapons, as well as the impact on our closest ally in the Middle East, the State of Israel.

Recently one of America's finest generals and former Commander of the United States Central Command, Gen. James Mattis, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that the United States needs “to come out now from its reactive crouch and to take a firm strategic stance in defense of our values.”

I couldn't agree more. The world is safer and more stable when America leads, leads from the front, not from the rear, and when we say what we mean and we mean what we say, and we back it up with action.

If the President can't do that, then over the last 2 years of his administration it will be incumbent upon Republicans and Democrats in Congress to lead the way in the absence of Presidential leadership and to do what we can do within our authority to prevent further erosion of American credibility on the world stage.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last Tuesday President Obama met with 10 people at the White House. These are people who had written him letters about the health care law. The White House said it designed this little publicity stunt to remind people to sign up for insurance on healthcare.gov by the deadline date of Sunday, February 15.

At his meeting the other day the President said that the people there were “a pretty good representative sample of people whose lives have been impacted,” as he said, “in powerful ways.”

I will tell you, if President Obama really wanted a representative sample, he would have included some of the people his law has affected in alarming and expensive ways. What does the President have to say to those people? Why didn't he invite any of them to the White House for his photo-op?

Here is what the New York Times wrote on Sunday, February 8. This is the Sunday Review, New York Times. The headline is “Insured, but Not Covered: New policies have many Americans scrambling.” Why isn't the President willing to talk to those people